

# OUTREACH AND ADVOCATE EXCHANGE

## SOUTH CAROLINA ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE South Carolina Crime Victim Services Division



**Fourth Quarter  
April - June 2020**

### Looking Toward the New “Normal”

By Director Burke Fitzpatrick

In my article in our last newsletter I noted the emergence of the Coronavirus in South Carolina. I even (wildly) speculated that state employees might be sent home to work, including the Crime Victim Services Division in the Attorney General's Office. Well, we all know how that turned out...

As of this writing most of us here are still working from home with a small contingent coming into the office to process postal mail and other physical documents. But, we are planning to gradually phase back into the office beginning in July and cautiously move toward a largely “normal” work schedule, all depending on the guidance our agency receives from the state Department of Administration.

Throughout this strange period of sheltering at home we have done everything necessary to keep grant funding, compensation payments and other services operating at normal levels.

I think we have largely succeeded. However, I'd like to hear from you, the service provider community, on your experiences with our division – where we did great and where we could do better. It's not that we're planning to do this all over again, but.... it appears that in 2020 anything can happen and probably will.

I feel called to say that during this period we have been inspired by you, the victims of crime provider community.

You have not stepped back from your work, your mission, your calling. Victims of crime in South Carolina have continued to be served by victim advocates and other practitioners with little interruption, even when sometimes this meant putting yourselves at risk of infection and, by extension, your families. We salute your dedication, your passion and your courage.

We pledge to continue serving you and will continue to strive to uphold the highest ethical and professional standards that has defined our shared profession. Thank you and please don't neglect caring for yourselves as your continue to care for others.



#### DID YOU KNOW?

##### July:

Hepatitis Awareness Week  
July 28th - August 3, 2020

##### August:

MediAlert Awareness  
Month

##### September:

National Alcohol and Drug  
Addiction Recovery Month

#### WHAT'S INSIDE:

[DCVO Article by Veronica Swain Kunz](#) Pg. 2

[DCVAG Article by BJ Nelson](#) Pg. 3

[CVST Article by Kim Hamm](#) Pg. 3

[DCVC Article by D. Scott Beard](#) Pg. 4

[DCVC Article by Ethel Douglas Ford](#) Pg. 5

[DCVO Article by Veronica Swain Kunz - continued](#) Pg. 6

[CVST Article by Kim Hamm - continued](#) Pg. 7

[Publisher/Editor's Contact Information](#) Pg. 8





## Hepatitis

Inflammatory condition  
of the liver

### Common types

#### Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B (HB) is an infectious disease caused by the hepatitis B virus (HBV) that affects the liver. It can cause both acute and chronic infections. Many people have no symptoms during the initial infection. Some develop a rapid onset of sickness with vomiting, yellowish skin, tiredness, dark urine and abdominal pain. Often these symptoms last a few weeks and rarely does the initial infection result in death. It may take 30 to 180 days for symptoms to begin. In those who get infected around the time of birth 90% develop chronic hepatitis B while less than 10% of those infected after the age of five do. Most of those with chronic disease have no symptoms; however, cirrhosis and liver cancer may eventually develop. Cirrhosis or liver cancer occur in about 25% of those with chronic disease.

#### Hepatitis A

Hepatitis A is an infectious disease of the liver caused by Hepatovirus A (HAV). Many cases have few or no symptoms, especially in the young. The time between infection and symptoms,

(continued on page 3)

## Did You Know This?

by Deputy Director Veronica Swain Kunz

### Crime Victim Ombudsman

#### NOT SO FAST ... Subpoenas for Victim Information

We often hear from panicked Advocates who have received subpoenas from defense attorneys for information they may have about victims. Whether the subpoena requests your notes, medical records, or any other information that a victim might consider confidential, a recent change to the Rules of Criminal Procedure requires a hearing to be held FIRST so that a judge may determine whether or not the information may be released. ***Please make sure your supervisors and agency leaders are aware of this important change to protect victims' privacy.***

#### SCRCrimP Rule 13(a)(2) - Issuance of Subpoena for Personal or Confidential Information About a Victim

A subpoena requiring the production of personal or confidential information about a victim may be served on a third party **only by court order**. Before entering the order and unless there are exceptional circumstances, the court **must** require giving **notice to the victim** so that the victim can move or quash or modify the subpoena or otherwise object.

#### Validating Responses

##### PHRASES THAT CAN COMFORT. WORDS THAT CAN HURT

Every day, we hear from crime victims who are hurting, angry and confused. We found these phrases very helpful to use (mine are posted right by my phone) as we try to soothe and reassure victim/survivors as they navigate the challenging criminal justice process.

- "That is a typical reaction...."
- "That is not uncommon..."
- "That is understandable"
- "That is a common reaction to a not so common event"
- "It's not the first time that I have heard that..."
- "That is a natural instinct for a parent..."
- "At times like this we may have more questions than we have answers"
- "I can't begin to imagine"
- "I have no words"
- "Absolutely"
- "I'm sorry"
- "I can't imagine how upset you must have been."

- "Anger is not uncommon. Some people even talk of being outraged or furious when they are so distressed."
- "Fear is not unusual. Many people are terrorized when they think their lives or someone they love is threatened."
- "Everyday life is shattered by senseless murder."
- "I'm not sure anyone can fully understand how much agony this disaster has caused you and your family."
- "Pain is a common bond in disaster, but its experience can't really be shared."
- "It can be terribly frustrating not to know what happened."
- "It must be very difficult to believe yourself to be to blame for this tragedy. It's not unusual for us to think back on ways that we could have avoided a disaster, but you are not responsible for the behavior of a murderer."

(continued on page 6)

(continued from page 2)

in those who develop them, is between two and six weeks. When symptoms occur, they typically last eight weeks and may include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, jaundice, fever, and abdominal pain. Around 10–15% of people experience a recurrence of symptoms during the six months after the initial infection. Acute liver failure may rarely occur, with this being more common in the elderly.

### Hepatitis C

Hepatitis C is an infectious disease caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV) that primarily affects the liver. During the initial infection people often have mild or no symptoms. Occasionally a fever, dark urine, abdominal pain, and yellow tinged skin occurs. The virus persists in the liver in about 75% to 85% of those initially infected. Early on chronic infection typically has no symptoms. Over many years however, it often leads to liver disease and occasionally cirrhosis. In some cases, those with cirrhosis will develop serious complications such as liver failure, liver cancer, or dilated blood vessels in the esophagus and stomach.

### Data from Focus Medica

**Reviewed by a  
panel of doctors**

**Consult a medical  
professional for advice**

## Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

by Deputy Director BJ Nelson

### Department of Crime Victim Assistance Grants (DCVAG)

Amidst the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Department of Crime Victim Assistance Grants (DCVAG) was able to accept all applications for the next grant funding cycle and have been working from home evaluating these applications for the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and State Victim Assistance Program (SVAP) grant funds.

This year, staff is expecting a VOCA award of \$25.9 million for FFY2020, which is a significant decrease from \$34.7 million in 2019 and \$50.8 million in 2018.

As a result of cautious management of the VOCA program in recent years, some unobligated funds are available as well to help mitigate this federal decrease.

Staff recommendations will be made with this in mind in order to create a slightly gentler glide slope toward reduced federal funding in the coming years. We also anticipate our VAWA award to be the same as it was in 2019 which is approximately \$2.4 million. SVAP will remain the same at \$500,000.



## Unprecedented Times Call For Unprecedented Measures

by Deputy Director Kim Hamm

### Department of Crime Victim Services Training, Provider Certification, and Statistical Analysis (CVST)

COVID-19 Pandemic. Murder Hornets. Protests and Unrest. Hurricane Season. 2020 has been a taxing year and it is only June. Our personal and professional lives have been impacted directly by these current events and we have all been challenged in new ways.

Social and physical distancing encouraged by health officials have canceled many regular and special activities including in-person continuing education training opportunities for Victim Service Providers (VSPs). In light of the current state of affairs our office has made some

temporary policy changes to allow additional flexibility.

*For the first time ever, we are allowing the basic core VSP course to be conducted in an all-online format.* We are working with agencies that sponsor the basic core VSP trainings to ensure VSPs who need to obtain certification have avenues to pursue it.

All VSPs have annual training requirements which are defined by law and therefore cannot be changed as easily as a policy. New VSPs must obtain the 15-hour basic core course within

one year from their hire date to become certified. Once certified, VSPs must obtain 12 hours of approved continuing education annually. We also allow for up to 12 hours of carryover credit to count toward the following calendar year training requirements. We allow and encourage VSPs to obtain their annual training requirements through online training while we are unable to have in-person gatherings. Several high-quality online trainings have been approved by CVST and are listed on [our website](#).

(continued on page 7)



<https://www.mayoclinic.org>

### Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition that's triggered by a terrifying event — either experiencing it or witnessing it. Symptoms may include flashbacks, nightmares and severe anxiety, as well as uncontrollable thoughts about the event.

Most people who go through traumatic events may have temporary difficulty adjusting and coping, but with time and good self-care, they usually get better. If the symptoms get worse, last for months or even years, and interfere with your day-to-day functioning, you may have PTSD.

Getting effective treatment after PTSD symptoms develop can be critical to reduce symptoms and improve function.

### Symptoms

Post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms may start within one month of a traumatic event, but sometimes symptoms may not appear until years after the event. These symptoms cause significant problems in social or work situations and in relationships. Symptoms can vary over time or vary from person to person.

## Crime Victim Compensation During the COVID-19 Pandemic

by Deputy Director D. Scott Beard

### Department of Crime Victim Compensation (DCVC)

How do you take a complicated operation involving hundreds of moving parts and numerous work processes and move it to an almost completely virtual operation in a few days' time - while still serving victims and advocates of South Carolina with victim compensation resources? Well we found that out in 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic changed all of our lives and the way we work just like it has changed the lives of almost everyone around the world in some way or another.

I am proud to say the team at DCVC has stepped up to the plate and delivered. Sometimes I feel like the US Postal Service - What was the old saying: "No matter wind, nor rain, nor dark of night?"

Applications are being entered, documents are being processed, eligibility determinations are being made and payments are being distributed - all predominately from home.

The surprising thing about all of this is that before the quarantine we only had three laptops in the department and no one worked from home.

But even though we are meeting the current demand, we are still facing several unknowns. Questions remain such as: how will this affect our revenue with the courts being either closed or acting in a diminished capacity?

Are interpersonal victimizations occurring in quarantine that will result in increased victims and therefore more applications in the future?

All of these questions and more are yet to be answered, but if the response by the staff of DCVC to COVID-19 is any indication, we will continue to meet our obligations in an efficient and professional manner.







### MedicAlert Awareness Month - August 2020

Although MedicAlert medical IDs have been around for five decades, chances are if someone wears a Medic Alert bracelet or necklace, you just may not know it or may not know the importance of it. To break this information barrier, August has been declared as Medic Alert Awareness month.

This special awareness event recognizes the role of the Medic Alert foundation in society and its many contributions to the health sector. For over 50 years, Medic Alert Foundation has continuously protected the health and well-being of millions of its members worldwide. It ensures that its members receive proper and timely medical treatment and care during an emergency.

### Purpose of MedicAlert Awareness Month

MedicAlert Awareness Month is dedicated to educating the public and raising awareness towards the need and use of Medic Alert medical IDs. Unfortunately, people whose family member or friends wear a Medic Alert bracelet or necklace are typically the only ones who educate themselves what it is,

## Community Outreach Services

By Assistant Deputy Director Ethel Douglas Ford

### Department of Crime Victim Compensation (DCVC)

#### Law Enforcement and Victim Advocate Outreach Initiative

DCVC collaborated with 4 municipalities and county law enforcement agencies within the sixth Judicial Circuit to conduct trainings with law enforcement and victim advocates during the 3rd quarter.

Outlined below is a breakdown of how many agencies and participants were trained in the Sixth Judicial Circuit:

- Agencies Coordinated: **4**
- Trainings Conducted: **4**
- Law Enforcement Officers Trained: **55**
- Victim Advocates Trained: **2**
- Total number of Law Enforcement and Victim Advocates Trained: **57**

Please note, training in the Sixth Judicial Circuit was suspended during the 4th quarter due to COVID-19. However, DCVC will continue to assess and monitor our State's response to the pandemic. Once it is safe to continue to conduct our training, DCVC will proceed by rescheduling the agencies that were canceled before coordinating with another circuit.

#### Professional Development Training Series

Our annual Professional Development training series has been canceled due to COVID-19. However, DCVC will continue to assess and monitor our State's response to the pandemic. Once it is safe to continue to conduct our training, DCVC will proceed by coordinating this event to be held in Columbia, South Carolina.

#### Georgetown County Victim Services Fair

The Second Annual Victim Services Fair was scheduled for May 2020 in Georgetown, South Carolina. However, due to COVID-19, this event was canceled. Once it is safe to continue to coordinate outreach activities, DCVC will resume meeting with the Victim Services Committee members and reschedule the event in Georgetown, South Carolina.

#### Scheduled DCVC Training Events

- July 9, 2020 - Court Based Victim Advocate DCVC Update and Basic Core
- August 13, 2020 - VRW Basic Core
- August 25, 2020 - SCCADVASA Basic Core
- September 9, 2020 - VRW Victim Assistance Fines, Fees and Assessment Fund
- September 9th -11th, 2020 - South Eastern States Victim Assistance Conference
- November 17, 2020 - SCCADVASA Basic Core



(continued from page 5)



what it's for and what to do in case of an emergency. The public, in general, are likely to remain clueless about MedicAlert ID.

A MedicAlert ID is designed to save a person's life in an emergency situation. There are many reasons why some would wear it. Generally, in any health conditions that can put a person at risk, hence the person will need immediate medical attention, a MedicAlert ID is a necessity. People with the following conditions should wear a MedicAlert bracelet or necklace:

- Food/drug Allergies
- Anaphylaxis
- Asthma
- Cardiac problems
- Hypertension
- Seizures
- Pacemaker
- Diabetes
- Stroke Risk
- Lung Disease
- Dialysis
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Blood Thinners
- Blood Disorders
- Dementia
- Alzheimer
- Autism
- Children with Special Needs

For additional information, go to

[https://  
www.consumerhealth  
digest.com](https://www.consumerhealthdigest.com)

## Did You Know This?

by Deputy Director Veronica Swain Kunz

Crime Victim Ombudsman

(continued from page 2)

- "Some people are ashamed and humiliated when they are helpless to prevent or respond to tragedy. But tragedy often makes people helpless and you didn't have any control over what happened."
- "Disasters like this don't make sense."
- "It is difficult to comprehend anything as terrible as what happened to you."
- "Sometimes it's hard to put words to an awful event. Tears can serve as a useful alternative."
- "Take your time. It's alright to cry after someone you love has been killed."
- "It's not unusual to feel like a little child or baby when something this awful overwhelms you."
- "It's very difficult to think you will ever feel good again when such a bad thing has happened to you."

### Phrases to Avoid

- I understand • Don't feel bad • You're strong • You're lucky that...
- You'll get through this • Don't cry • It's God's will • It could be worse
  - At least you still have...





### National Drug and Alcohol Awareness and Recovery Month

September is National Drug and Alcohol Awareness and Recovery Month. In its twenty-third year "Recovery Month" seeks to educate Americans about addiction treatment and mental health services and how these services can enable those with substance use and abuse problems to conquer their dependence.

The focus of National Drug and Alcohol Awareness and Recovery is to acknowledge and commend gains made by those in recovery. Recovery Month spreads a positive message that treatment is effective. People can recover. As a matter of fact, National Drug and Alcohol Awareness and Recovery Month highlights success stories of people who have overcome addictions and the people and organizations that have helped them. Substance abuse is a serious problem in America. Its toll affects individuals, their families, businesses and the healthcare system.

For additional information, go to <https://safeopedia.com>

## Unprecedented Times Call For Unprecedented Measures

by Deputy Director Kim Hamm

### Department of Crime Victim Services Training, Provider Certification, and Statistical Analysis (CVST)

(continued from page 3)

There are many other options for online training relevant to VSPs and if you have questions about how to seek credit for online training that has not been previously approved please do not hesitate to contact us or check out our website, [cvst.scag.gov](http://cvst.scag.gov), which includes information on how to submit non-accredited certification requests. If you have questions please email us at [cvst@scag.gov](mailto:cvst@scag.gov).

#### New Resource Available

The Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture recently launched "[Talking About Race](#)".

a new online portal designed to help individuals, families, and communities talk about racism, racial identity and the way these forces shape every aspect of society, from the economy and politics to the broader American culture.

This wonderful resource includes a plethora of substantive information. One of the foundational subject areas covered, which is of upmost importance to Victim Service Providers, is Self-Care: <https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/self-care>. Self-Care is a vital in our work as VSPs to serve victims of every race and creed.

Please make and take time to take care of yourselves during this difficult period, and always. Just like they teach for airline safety, you must put on your own mask first before you can help others. Thank you for all that you do to serve the most vulnerable among us.







# SUMMER IS HERE!



## Contact Information for Publisher/Editor:

Ethel Douglas Ford, CPM  
Assistant Deputy Director  
1205 Pendleton Street  
Columbia, SC 29201  
Phone: 803.734.1704  
Fax: 803.734.1708

[eford@scag.gov](mailto:eford@scag.gov)

[www.sova.sc.gov](http://www.sova.sc.gov)

